

# Life & Times of Jesus #02

by Jack Hibbs

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*The Incarnation is the divine act of God whereby He willingly took upon Himself the form of a human being, predicted in advance by God's prophetic utterance and fulfilled in Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 49:53

**Scripture:** Romans 1:1

**Topics:** "Jesus Christ", "Biblical Inspiration"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding and proclaiming the Word of God. He references Galatians 4:4-5, which speaks of God becoming a human. The preacher also mentions Romans 1:1-4, which highlights Jesus' birth through Mary and his declaration as the Son of God through the resurrection. He emphasizes the inspiration of the Bible in 2 Timothy 3:16 and encourages believers to test the spirits and discern true followers of Jesus in 1 John 4:1. The sermon concludes with the mention of God's love demonstrated through Jesus' death for sinners in Romans 5:8 and the mystery of godliness in 1 Timothy 3:16.

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## Transcript

Luke chapter 2 verse 6 says, And so it was that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And so she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, and this will be a sign to you.

You will find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was the angelic multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. And so it was when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, Let us now go to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen as it was told to them. This morning we are in part two of the series The Life and Times of Jesus Christ.

And the title this morning is Christ and His First Coming. If you're note-taking this morning, you ought to jot that down. Christ and His First Coming.

We are so often occupied, and we should be, regarding the events of Christ's rapture and Christ's second coming. But as we go through this series, as we go through a chronological unfolding of the events of Jesus Christ and His life on this earth, we look now to this title Christ and His First Coming. Specifically we mean, and this is obvious, Christ coming into the world.

Yes, that is true, and we're going to look at that. But truly, specifically, and catch note of this, in fact, if you get this, you'll be really smart prophetically. The official first coming of Jesus Christ literally took place near the end of His life.

It took place, in fact, during the last week of His life. The actual documented first coming of Christ is not the baby being born in Bethlehem, though we'll look at that this morning, and though that's important. The technical first coming of Christ, if anybody should ask you on the street, the answer is, when Christ came to the temple and examined the temple during His passion week, that is His last week of life on earth.

When Jesus came to the temple, you remember He turned over the money changers and drove out those that made a merchandise out of God? That was officially to the nation His first coming. And of course He didn't, or He wasn't recognized by the nation at His first coming. But He will be recognized by the nation at His second coming.

That is His physical bodily return to earth. The first coming was His arrival to earth, yes, specifically to the nation Israel, specifically to the temple mount. Listen everyone, His second coming will be a physical bodily return to the temple, to Israel, to the temple mount, in physical form.

He will bodily come to that area again. That's not the rapture, that's something very different and the second coming. But this morning we're focusing on Christ and His first coming.

And of course, we are using as a, really, a theme for this entire series. And that is found there in Colossians chapter 2. You're going to know this verse, you know what? You're going to know this verse so well. In 16 weeks of these studies you're going to have this memorized.

Colossians 2, 9, where it says, Therefore in Christ all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in bodily form. And that's very, very fantastic. As we go by introduction, you might want to jot something down.

The first coming of Christ is in connection with this very important fact called the Incarnation. Can you write that down? The Incarnation. This is Christ or God being revealed in human flesh.

The Incarnation. The literally of taking upon or the adopting of the physical human frame of mankind. This is God's work.

That God deems that He will come to earth and clothe Himself with human flesh. Definition? The Incarnation. The Incarnation.

It's important that we understand that. It's important that we understand that Jesus has in fact come in human flesh. By the way, that is paramount to Christianity.

If you're a Christian this morning, you must hold to the truth that not only as we saw last week that Christ dwelt in eternity, that He's preexistent, but also that He is Christ who has come in the flesh and that He is incarnate. That God came in human form. We'll see the reasons why not only this week but in the weeks to follow.

1 John 4, verse 1. It says, Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God. That is, people in this world, if they proclaim they know Jesus, the Bible says test them. Now did you hear what I just said? Test them.

Man, I tell you, and I pray it's not this church. I pray it's not you. But you and I need to be walking more and more with a godly, listen, I want to say this in the right light, with a godly critical spirit.

I don't mean a bitter critical spirit. I mean a godly critical spirit. I don't mean judging one another.

I mean, as the Scripture says, testing the spirits. Yesterday at the National Surfing Championships down in Huntington Beach, we went down there to watch. And my daughter, Rebecca, she was missing.

She's gone somewhere. Where is she? Well, we caught up with her. And I said, where were you? And she says, I was just sharing the Lord with this guy over here.

I was minding my own business and he came up and approached her. And she began to share the Lord with him. He's from Turkey.

And he told her, I believe in God. And so they got into a dialogue about God. And it was beautiful, because she said, well, did you know that God died for your sins? He didn't know that.

So when somebody says, I believe in God, you need to, what? Test the spirit and see what do they mean. God who? As Christians, we are so ignorantly passive when it comes to this. When somebody says, I believe in God, we get all excited and say, oh, they believe in God.

You know, when somebody says they believe in God, you should go, hmm, really? You believe in the eternal creator of the universe? Yep. You believe in the one who showed himself to mankind? Yep. You believe that he came and died on a cross and rose again from the dead for our justification, for our salvation? Nope.

Oh, test the spirits. That's where you put a big period right there and stop. Because now this person needs to meet the God who died for them.

Amen? Test the spirits. He says, test the spirits, whether they are of God. Because many false prophets have gone out into the world and by this we know the spirit of God.

Every spirit that confess that Jesus Christ, that is Jesus Messiah. Listen, Christ is not Jesus' last name. His name isn't Jesus Christ.

What's your last name? Christ. No, his name is Jesus, his mission is Messiah, Christ. Christ is simply Greek for the Hebrew, Mashiach, Messiah, Savior of the world.

Jesus, when you say Christ, you are saying Jesus, Savior of the world. That's what Christ means. So every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God.

And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus came in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist which you have heard is coming and already is now in the world. We are studying that in depth on Wednesday nights.

2 John 1.7 2 John 1.7 John warns us and he says, Many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess that Jesus has come in human flesh. This is a deceiver and an Antichrist. Boy, that's powerful, isn't it? The incarnation of Christ is the divine act of God whereby he willingly took upon himself the form of a human being.

God becoming a human. Galatians 4, verses 4 and 5 says, Am I going too fast? I got to warn you, studying for this series, we are only in the second series and I get so excited. In preparation for this, I am so excited in putting this message together that I get a little out of hand giving it.

I think last week by the third service, I was yelling and had to ask for their forgiveness. I was so pumped up about it. You know, by the third service, I've had three, well, by that time it's about five or six times I've heard the message personally.

And it's like, let's go with this, you know? Let's go with it. We'll go with what? Go with information like this, Galatians 4, verse 4. But when the fullness of time had come, that means the right time had arrived, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that is Jesus had to fulfill the law to redeem those who were under the law that we might receive the adoption as sons. The awesome thing about your Christianity, friend, is that it is the descending of God from heaven to man.

Religion is not Christianity. Religion is man and man-made effort reaching and groping and looking for God. That is called religion.

That is the definition of religion. God groping and reaching and looking for God. But Christianity is God having sought out man.

Did you know that? Christianity is saying that God came down out of heaven to save mankind. Religion says man can be good enough and work hard enough that somehow he'll earn God's presence or he'll become a God himself. That is religion and its abomination to God.

Christianity is not religion. Christianity says God came and visited us. God came out of heaven and sought us out.

Isn't that great? Isn't that wonderful? It's good news. In Ezekiel 36, verse 27, this is God reaching out to us. He says, I will put My Spirit in you and cause you to walk in My statutes and you will keep My judgments and you will do them.

Why and how? Because He will put His Spirit in us. That's God coming down among men. It's very exciting.

By the way, that's a call to fellowship. It's a call to friendship by God Himself in our everyday lives. But to accomplish this spirit indwelling, to accomplish this life of being with God, Christ had to come to earth.

He had to come in His first coming. Christ had to be born among us and to experience this life. Look with me at our first point this morning.

And that is His coming was prophesied in advance. Concerning His coming to earth, His coming was prophesied to us in advance. Jesus Christ was and is the only personality of all human history.

Oh, and I hope there's a non-believer in here right now. Oh man, I hope you're a skeptic this morning. Listen to this.

This ought to just jar your head. Jesus is the only one in all of human history that has a book written about Him that not only tells you He would come to earth, but talks about His preexistence, talks about every moment of His life, His purpose for coming, and the fact that the prophetic word of God told us this in advance. No one has prophecy written for them in advance.

My friend, you ought to just take that to the bank. Or if you're not sure, you ought to take it to the laboratory and see if it's true. Look at this point.

Point number one. That He is the only one that has had prophecy given regarding Him in advance. Very, very important.

Consider this also. Predicted by God Himself. That's right.

God Himself predicted that Christ would come. In Genesis chapter 3 verses 14 and 15. So the Lord God said to the serpent, because you have done this thing, you are cursed among all the cattle and more than any beast of the field.

So on your belly you shall go and you shall eat dust. I love to say that. Satan, you shall eat dust all the days of your life.

And I will put enmity, warfare. I will put warfare between you and the woman. Interesting.

What's that all about? And between your seed, literally in the Hebrew, between your sperm, your offspring, and her sperm or offspring. We'll come back to that in a second. He shall bruise your head or crush, actually, your head.

God is speaking to the serpent which Satan had embodied. God says, He, that is the seed of the woman, will crush your head but you shall bruise his heel. You're gonna afflict him in the physical life.

Satan will have an opportunity to afflict Christ in this physical life. But Christ will crush Satan's head. And how is that to be? This is God's prophetic utterance regarding the incarnation of Christ.

Way back in Genesis, God told the serpent, God told Satan, that from the offspring of the woman, this is very interesting language because it is impossible. The language that God gives here, it's impossible. A woman has an egg.

She doesn't have the sperm. God is saying, and right here in Genesis chapter 3 is a radical theological truth, that God was going to work through the woman excluding a man, a human being. Man.

A male man. Not a postman, but a male man. God was gonna work in the life of mankind via a woman without a man.

And the woman would become pregnant and bear forth a son who is the Son of God that has the physical body of us, mankind, but whose father has been engineered by the Holy Spirit. My friend, that is the greatest miracle of all. It's incredible.

And here, way back in Genesis, thousands of years ago, God said, I'm gonna do this thing. I am going to have a woman bear forth a child and He is gonna crush your head. And I wonder if Satan was confused and in awe about what he must have meant by that.

God was gonna do this very thing. In Genesis 22, verse 2, on to verse 8, it says, And God said, Take now your son, He said this to Abraham, Take now your son, Abraham, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to a mountain or to a land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will show you. Genesis 22, verse 6. It says, So Abraham took the wood, listen, the wood, of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac's back.

Do you know any other son that had wood laid on his back? And he took the fire in his hand, which fire speaks of judgment, and the knife. And the two of them went together in agreement. But Isaac spoke to Abraham, his father, and said, My father.

And he said, Here I am, son. And then he said, Look, here's the fire and here's the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide for himself the lamb. Isn't that wonderful? The incarnate Christ is as what John the Baptist said in John 1, 29.

Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. When Abraham went to Mount Moriah, Mount Moriah today is called Golgotha. We call it Mount Calvary.

It's where the face of the skull is there just on the north side of that Arab bus station, just outside the garden of the tomb is this hilltop where Abraham was to offer up Isaac who carried wood on his back to be laid upon that altar. And, of course, God stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son. But thousands of years later, a father led his son to a hilltop.

And on top of that hill, the Lamb of God was sacrificed for the sins of the world. My son, God will provide for himself the lamb. And he did, didn't he? In the person of Jesus Christ.

God had prophesied in advance to Abraham in Genesis 22. Very, very exciting. Very powerful.

Revelation 5, verse 12. Are you writing these down? Oh, I hope you're writing these down. Revelation 5, 12.

The Bible says there, Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches. The Lamb of God. In Luke 1, verse 26, the Bible says now, concerning this Lamb, On the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth.

To a virgin betrothed or engaged to a man whose name was Joseph. Of the house of David, the virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said, Rejoice, highly favored one.

The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women. But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

I love the way that King James puts that. I'm considering what manner of greeting this is. Can you imagine if an angel showed up? I think, I guess, we would do the same thing.

What is this all about? Then the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor in the sight of God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and the throne, he will be great, and be called the son of the highest, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, according to the flesh.

Mary was a descendant of David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. Then Mary said to the angel, How can this be, since I have never known a man? That's physically.

I've never had intercourse. How can this be? And the angel said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the highest will overshadow you. Therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

The Holy Spirit was to, by divine act, fertilize Mary's egg. We don't know how this happened. It just happened.

Miraculously. And the Hebrew construction is extremely powerful, or the Greek. And that is, Mary was not pregnant one moment, and in the moment pregnant.

But not of mankind. And not by human means. It's as though God snapped His finger.

And there, conception took place within Mary's womb. Why? Because God was going to reveal Himself to mankind as an angel? No. As a deified one? No.

God was going to reveal Himself as a human. And He would live the life of a human. And He would suffer also the weaknesses of a human as well.

Christ incarnate. Very powerful. Very exciting.

Very life changing. Look at our second point that we want to make right here. His coming was prophesied of in advance, predicted by God Himself.

We just saw that. But also, predicted by God's prophets. Predicted by God's prophets.

Who is Jesus Christ? Is He significant? Should He be important in your life? Well, listen. God predicted that He would come. Told us how to find Him.

How to watch for Him. How to identify Him. But also, God said through His prophets that He could be recognized.

Isaiah chapter 7, verse 14. And granted, I am touching on a few verses out of hundreds, over 300 that we could look at. We'll touch on a few this morning.

God, through His prophets, predicted as well. Isaiah 7, verse 14. Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign.

Everybody says, well, I want to see a sign. Well, God says, here comes a sign for you. Behold, the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son and He shall be called Emmanuel.

Emmanuel translated as God is among us. Well, His name Jesus in Greek is God has saved us. God our Savior.

You put that Old Testament declaration of Isaiah 7, verse 14 together with the New Testament revelation of His name in Greek, which is Jesus. Hebrew, His name is Joshua. Joshua.

It means that God is among us and God is going to save us. How? Through the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Regarding this, Malachi chapter 3, verse 1 tells us, Behold, I will send My messenger who will prepare the way before Me.

And then suddenly the Lord whom you are seeking will come to His temple. That's His first coming, people. That happened during His Passion Week.

The messenger of the covenant whom you desire will come, says the Lord Almighty. He spoke that through His prophet Malachi. It was prophesied in advance.

Consider the third look at this prediction. Predicted by God's Word, the Bible. I love this.

Note it. Psalm 40, verse 7 says, Behold, I come, and in the volume of the book it is written of Me. Look at this here in my hand.

Look at this book. See, the point I'm trying to stress this morning is that God prophetically has revealed Himself through His Son in this book. From cover to cover, spanning thousands of years, written by some 40 authors.

There are 66 books that is scientifically accurate, that is linguistically accurate, that is archaeologically accurate, historically, prophetically accurate. There's no flaw in this book. And God is saying to every skeptic in the world, Consider My Son.

He's come to earth. This book has been laid out before you that you might know who He is. Isn't it something? People are so quick to criticize who Jesus is, but we ought to come back to them and say, Have you read His book? Have you read His book from cover to cover? Most people are going to say no.

Then how can you criticize the declaration of God and the fact that God has said, I'm going to reach you by My only begotten Son, if you haven't read His book? If we haven't studied the book? You know, when I come up here to teach, I'm scared to death every time. Now you may think, I've heard people say, I don't see how you can think this, but I've heard people say, Oh, you seem so comfortable up there. I'm freaking out before a service.

I'm panicking. Oh God, you know, please, you know, make it happen. And one of the great convictions is God doesn't want me to come up here unless what I'm teaching on, I believe with all my heart, and in fact, I'm willing to die for it.

And I want to have that intensity always in my heart. This is true. When we lead in worship, we should never come up here and lead in worship if we're not first worshipping ourselves.

How can a worship leader lead us in worship if he's not worshipping God in his life? How can a teacher of the Word of God teach unless it's happening in his life? And God says, this is what I require. When somebody criticizes the Bible, when somebody says, well, you know, you can't believe the Word of God. You know what? Quite frankly, I'll hold up the Bible and I'll say, show me, my friend, show me where

there's an error.

In fact, let me encourage you because you'll be the first one to find one and you'll become a billionaire if you can write a book on it. Find it. You can't find it.

Voltaire couldn't find it. Bertrand Russell couldn't find it. Darwin couldn't find it.

Kierkegaard couldn't find it. Stalin couldn't find an error. There is no error.

As time goes on, the Bible is proven more and more every day. I don't know, last night I was watching a Nova documentary on Alexandria, Egypt. Maybe you saw it on the origin of lighthouses.

And they found, just as the Bible talks about, these areas in Egypt where they found these idols and stuff. Well, that's great. But they're just finding the past, which is wonderful.

But it's all biblically recorded with accuracy. God predicted by His Word, the Bible, that Jesus would come. The critic should stand up and take note of that.

How so, Jack? Well, how about like this? Isaiah chapter 61, verses 1 and 2 are completely or is completely linked to Luke 4.18. Luke 4.18 says the same of what was prophesied thousands of years in advance by Isaiah, 743 years before Luke's time, when it says in Isaiah 61, And the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor, and He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. And at that, Jesus sat down, remember. Hey, Jesus Christ was quoting out of the scroll of Isaiah, in Luke chapter 4, Isaiah chapter 61.

Jesus went to the Bible. When Jesus read that portion of Scripture, He sat down, which I think it's a good idea. The teachers in those days sat down, and all the students had to stand up.

How'd you like that? You guys are spoiled. You got cushy seats, air conditioning. Jesus opened the scroll, He read it, and He sat down, He said, Alright, today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.

And their jaws hit the ground. Jesus said, I am what this verse speaks about. I'm the messenger, I'm the one, I'm He.

Their jaws hit the ground. The Word of God. Jesus quoted the Word of God.

You know, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy more than any other book of the Bible. Did you know that? That's His favorite book, it appears. During His earthly ministry, He quoted Deuteronomy more than any other book.

Romans chapter 1, verse 1 through 4. Paul says this. Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the Gospel of God, which He promised before through the prophets and the Bible, the Holy Scriptures. Concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who was born of the seed of David, that is, He came through Mary, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.

Isn't that great? 2 Timothy 3.16 says, All Scripture, the Bible, is given by the inspiration of God. That is, God has possessed man to write or proclaim the Word. That's why it's without error.

You think God was going to leave this book to ourselves? Are you kidding? It is profitable, He says, for doctrine, and on He goes. And then 2 Peter chapter 1, Peter says, Know this first, that no revelation of Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the revelation of Scripture never came by the will of man, but holy men of God, as they were possessed, moved, or inspired by the Holy Spirit.

That's powerful stuff. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would bring to remembrance whatsoever He taught His disciples. Why? The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God, the Bible.

Let's just continue. I was going to mention this thing about confrontational truth. Maybe I should.

Confrontational truth. When Christ speaks things like this, He says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. That's Bible.

That's confrontational truth. It's when we as Christians speak that, that the Holy Spirit comes upon that passage and drives it home to somebody's heart. Why? Because it's biblical, it's Bible, and the Holy Spirit uses it.

That's why if you quote, if you're witnessing to somebody and you quote your grandpa to them, there's no effect. Well, my grandpa says, Well, good luck, because that's all you have. But when you say, Jesus said, Charles Spurgeon said, When you preach a message, it had better have a lot of Bible in it.

He said, Every message should be plump and pregnant with Bible-ine. He called it Bible-ine. Full of Bible.

Very, very important. Let's consider this. Our second point this morning is His coming to earth was experientially confirmed.

The second point, His coming was experientially confirmed. How's that? John chapter 1 verse 1 says, In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. But John chapter 1 verse 10 says, He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, but the world did not know Him, or the world has recognized Him.

He came to His own, that's the Jewish people, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, that is all of our earthly birth, our first birth, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Listen, the coming of Jesus Christ to earth was experientially confirmed. People saw Him. People talked to Him.

People heard Him. They were affected by Him. In 1 John chapter 1, listen to this, the same John writes this, That which was from the beginning, that's 1 John chapter 1 verse 1, which we have heard, John says we've heard Him.

And you might say, well that's one reporter's opinion. Well consider this, he's one reporter writing the book, yes, but there were hundreds of early disciples, then thousands, then tens of thousands, then millions, then possibly billions, who don't give it a second thought to give their life for Christ and the truth that He has revealed. Well that's one reporter's opinion still.

Yes, John says, but we even heard Him. So much was John convinced of what John taught that he was willing to suffer death if necessary. Peter, crucified, upside down to death, because he believed what he saw and heard about Christ.

Thomas, killed. James, beheaded. Luke, killed.

Paul, beheaded. What do you have in your life worth dying for? If you're a Christian, the first thing that comes to mind is Jesus Christ. Right from the get-go.

Right from the get-go. John says, That which we had from the beginning, we've heard Him, which we've seen Him with our own eyes. We looked upon Him in our own hands.

We have handled Him concerning the word of life. The life was manifested and we've seen Him and we bear witness to You and declare to You that eternal life which was from the Father. He was manifested to us.

That which we have seen, we've heard, and we declare to You that You also may have fellowship with us. And truly, he says, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Christ Jesus came to earth and He was experientially confirmed.

Meaning, if you would have lived 1,999 years ago, you would have seen Him. You could have followed Him. You could have listened to Him.

You could have seen His works. Consider this. He says that it's confirmed to us by eyewitness account.

Matthew chapter 21. The nation saw Him with their eyes. Matthew 21 verse 1 says, Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and they came to Bethpage at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two of His disciples saying to them, Go into the village opposite you and immediately you will find a donkey tied to a colt there.

Loose them and bring them to Me and if anyone says to you, you shall say to them, The Lord has need of them. And immediately He will send them. And all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of by the prophet.

That's the Old Testament prophet. Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you humbly and sitting on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. And they brought the colt and the donkey, their clothes on them and set Jesus on them and a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road and others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

Then the multitude who went before and those who followed cried out saying, Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The nation saw that moment. Jesus, Matthew, both of them quoting Zechariah 9 verse 9 written nearly a thousand years before Christ came. And the word, the buzz word or the code word was this to Jerusalem.

O Jerusalem, rejoice greatly, you daughter of Zion. Shout, daughter of Jerusalem, for behold, your king comes to you just having salvation, humbly riding upon a donkey, upon the colt, the foal of a donkey. Isn't that fantastic? You could have experienced Christ.

You had the book. Here he comes. You could have said, Hi, Jesus.

Experientially. Nothing was done in secret. We're not following some whimsical creation or fables.

We're following facts. Did you know that Christianity is that we have faith founded upon facts. It's not blind faith.

We have the Bible. We have science to look at that confirms God's word. Also this.

Scripture teaches us that it was confirmed by what God had said. Micah chapter 5 verse 2. Micah 5 2 tells us, But you, O Bethlehem, listen, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to me the one to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, even everlasting, the hill countries of Bethlehem, beautiful as you see, hills rolling, shepherds to this day. This is a current picture.

It hasn't changed. And God said through Micah, the Old Testament prophet, 522 years before Jesus was born. God spoke through Micah.

And he said, You, Bethlehem, Bethlehem, the Messiah is going to come out of you. He's eternal. Born in a shepherd town.

Low income town. Still to this day. We have some images that you can see.

I mean, it's just absolutely as it was thousands of years ago. And when the Bible says that he was born in a manger. Consider this.

I would have liked to have shown you this image that I took a photograph of, but I was unable to find it. But here's a neat stone representation. I want you to keep your eye on this closely.

Do you notice this carving here? There's donkey. See the donkey and the animals looking at him right there. And there's baby Jesus.

And look, he's lying in this manger. Doesn't that manger look like it's made out of brick? You know what the message they're trying to convey? All mangers in Israel to this day. You mean they still make them? Yes.

Because a manger is not for babies. Well, I thought the Christmas story said you could find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes. It's true.

But a manger is a feeding trough for animals. It holds water and it holds grain. It's made out of stone.

And we've seen fantastic out in the middle of nowhere. Ask someone who's been with us to Israel. Out in the middle of nowhere near a well or someplace, there'll be a manger carved out of stone.

And you pull up the bucket like we did. Out in no man's land, pulled up the bucket and poured water into the manger. You put food in the manger.

That's why he's the bread of life. You put the bread of life in a manger for food. By the way, you don't bring a manger inside of a house.

It's unclean. It's a filthy thing. They hadn't aligned it with straw or something because it had cow boogers and stuff on it.

I mean, it had donkey sliver on it. You don't put a brand new baby in there. You align it with material.

And by the way, you don't put it inside your house. You put it outside your house. Mangers were outside the house.

Just like you put your dog's bowl outside the house. Isn't that funny? God sent His Son and you could find Him in a manger. That's why it says when everybody came to look at Him, remember they all came to see Him? He's in a manger.

He's on public display outside the house. It's fantastic. Very exciting.

God's Word, true. The virgin birth of Jesus Christ. Jesus had to be born of a virgin.

Very, very important. Had to be that way. Let's consider this also.

Third point. His coming changed the course of human history. His coming changed the course of human history.

Consider this. You today will probably buy something or maybe you look at your watch and it's going to say August 31st. I'm sorry, August 1st.

Missed a month. August 1st, 1999. Did you know that every time you sign your check or you do something with the date, did you know that you are consciously or not using the fact that Christ came into the world? 1999.

You know the earth is a lot older than that. You know that. Human existence is a lot older than that.

You know that. But if you're going to do anything meaningful and anything actual and factual on this earth, you've got to do it by a date. And that date is the date concerning the coming of the Son of God to earth.

Isn't that cool? I love that. Why? We ought to start asking people on the streets, why is it 1999? They'll probably say because it is. And the answer is Jesus is.

That's the answer. Listen. His coming changed the course of human history.

How's that? By qualifying God's plan for the ages. By qualifying God's plan for the ages. Quickly this.

Because Jesus Christ came into the world as God in human form, His purpose was manifold. Number one, it was to identify with humanity. Why? Because God was going to save mankind.

Check this out. I hope this doesn't offend you. I find it highly attractive.

Jesus did not come and die for angels. Did you know that? They're not redeemed. Now you might say, oh, poor angels.

Well, you know, I don't know what angels know. It's their tough luck. I don't know.

Some of them are lost forever. We know this. But Jesus didn't die for angels.

He died for us. He identified with humanity. Second thing is He came to reveal God to man.

Hebrews chapter 1 verse 1 tells us that in His last days He has spoken to us finally by His Son. He used to speak to us by prophets. Now Hebrews chapter 1 says He has spoken to us by His Son.

Why would you follow somebody else? Why would you follow some strange teaching by some nincompoop or some crazy group of people? Jesus. What has Jesus said? What does the Bible say about Him? He has come to reveal God to us. He qualified God's plan for us in that He showed the power of God over evil.

He went around healing people, raising people from the dead, opening up the eyes of the blind, cleansing lepers from leprosy. He came to forgive mankind their sin. He qualified God's plan in that He came to die for our sins.

He destroyed the work of Satan. Jesus did. Only God can do that.

Man couldn't do that. We try so hard, don't we, to unravel Satan's work. You know, that's why there's hospitals.

Satan loves to afflict. Satan loves to sicken people and to abuse people and destroy people. And we have hospitals and we have various ways of trying to undo, consciously or unconsciously.

You can go to Cedars-Sinai where they have a great medical facility there for all kinds of problems. What are they trying to do there at that great hospital? Undo the work of Satan. Now if you ask the physician there, What are you doing here? He wouldn't say, We're trying to undo the work of Satan.

But that's exactly what they're doing. But only Jesus can do it. Ultimately, the great physician heals completely everything to destroy the work of Satan.

He qualifies God's plan by representing our concerns to the Father. You know, the Bible teaches that Jesus right now is praying for you and I right now. Isn't that something? Well, what's He praying about? Something you and I need for sure.

Let's consider this also. Jesus, He changed the course of human history also by vindicating God's justice. Vindicating God's justice.

What could that mean? God is just and He demands payment for wrong. When Jesus Christ came, He vindicated God's justice in that what God has to have to abolish sin and its power Jesus Christ did by going to the cross. Ezekiel 18 verse 4 Behold, God says, all souls are mine, the souls of the Father as well as the souls of the Son are mine, and the soul that sins, it shall die.

Romans 6.23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ. In Isaiah chapter 53, God says that it pleased Him to lay upon Jesus the sins of mankind. Why? Because He was gonna pay the debt of man's sins completely.

And then finally this, very important, check this out, write it down. By enacting the power of salvation. He changed the course of human history by enacting the power of salvation.

And that by the preaching of the gospel, people can be saved. By the going forth of this good news. I know it sounds silly.

Paul the Apostle said by preaching the gospel, the silliness, the funniness, the weirdness of giving out the gospel, he said it's a strange thing. But people are changed. People are converted.

How is that? Because it's a spiritual truth. It's a power. By Jesus Christ coming to earth, He died on the cross, rose again from the dead, He enacted the power of salvation.

Quickly, Hebrews chapter 9 verse 16 says, For where there is a testament, that is a will, there must also be the necessity for the death of the testator. For a testament is in force only after a man dies, since it has no power at all while the man lives. That's why you have the New Testament.

The power of Jesus Christ now to save you. Why? Because He died. He came to die for the sins of the world.

That's why any other way into heaven is an abomination to Him. Hebrews chapter 9 verse 26 says, But now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. We're almost done.

Romans chapter 5 verse 8 says, But God demonstrated His love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Jesus Christ died for us. Romans 1 verse 16 says, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The incarnation of Christ, the coming of Jesus.

And I want to give you the last couple of verses, one that you hear often here. In 1 Timothy chapter 3 verse 16, it says, Without debate, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifested, that is you could touch Him, feel Him, hear Him, see Him, in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and then He was received up into glory.

Isn't that awesome? Isn't that exciting? Very important. Very life-changing. Have you considered what Jesus Christ has done? In Hebrews chapter 2 verse 9 you see, there it says, It was Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for every one of us.

Have you experienced Him? Have you, as we go through this series, this being the second part of the series, the second teaching, do you know Jesus as having been the one come in the flesh? That He's come to earth. God manifested in human form. This is the Jesus we worship.

Let's pray. Father, we come before You, and Lord, we ask, that by the power of Your Holy Spirit, Lord Jesus, You might, this morning, descend upon us with this truth and with the weight of it, though, Lord, we'd be so feeble at delivering such a vast topic in just a few moments of time, but, Lord, that You would make it clear to our hearts, Lord, that this morning we would be drawn closer to You, Lord, that this morning we would even be spurred on to know You more, and, Lord, this morning that perhaps someone would come to know You for the first time in their life. Lord, I ask in Jesus' name that You would speak to every heart here.

And it's in Your name we pray. Amen.

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